

TWO ORNATE BOOMERANGS FROM NORTH QUEENSLAND.

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(Plate XL.)

I am indebted to Mr. J. A. Boyd, of Ripple Creek, near Ingham, North Queensland, for an opportunity of describing two additional carved Boomerangs. Mr. Boyd informs me that the weapons were procured from the Herbert River Blacks, who obtain them from the natives living farther south, near Townsville. Both are similar in size and shape, with plain obtusely pointed and non-emarginated apices, slightly convex on the sculptured face, practically flat on the reverse, showing only tool or gouge marks, whilst the former, or obverse, is smooth and polished like similar weapons in general. The length around the curve is two feet three inches; across from apex to apex two feet one inch; the width two, and two and a quarter inches respectively; and the weight of each is ten and a half ounces.

The wider of the two (fig. 1) bears on the obverse a line of half ovals along each margin, twelve on the convex, and eleven on the concave. The centre of the boomerang is ornamented by two lines of elongated ovals following the curve of the weapon, the row contiguous to the convex edge containing twelve, and that on the concave margin thirteen, ovals. All the ovals are incised with oblique grooves, and each re-entering angle along the convex edge bears two very obliquely placed nicks or notches. The apices bear v-shaped grooves reversed, two at one end, three at the other.

The second weapon (fig. 2) is similarly ornamented, except that only one line of ovals occurs along the centre of the boomerang; the re-entering angles are without notches, and the apices are not specially sculptured in any way. Between the almost median line of ovals, and the half-ovals of the convex margin, and near the centre of the weapon is an object apparently intended to represent a tree, with two transverse grooves below in imitation of the ground surface. A single long groove at right angles forms the stem, and suddenly enlarges into a bottle-brush-like head, terminated by a short wavy single line like the stem. The latter bears on each side three sets of upwardly directed off-sets, possibly intended for branches. On the flat reverse of this weapon, and at one end, are incised the outlines of two guns, one above the other and pointing in opposite directions, and apparently intended for old-fashioned percussion pieces.

Both boomerangs are distinct from any previously figured by me, although one (fig. 2) approaches the Section (*g*) of my first paper* on this subject. It differs, however, in the presence of a natural object—the tree (!), and the absence of emarginated apices and notches in the re-entering angles of the marginal scalloping. The second, on the other hand, is possibly allied to Section (*k*) of the before-mentioned paper, but the sculpture is bilaterally symmetrical, and there is an absence of cross-bars; still neither weapon can be placed in any of the sections of the paper cited, and yet further tend to show the great diversity of sculpture existing amongst these boomerangs.

On the different occasions when my former papers were written I had not access to Mr. J. Edge-Partington's "Album,"† and was therefore unable to refer to the figures therein illustrated when epitomising the different patterns of boomerang ornamentation known. Mr. Partington's Pl. 353, fig. 2, clearly belongs to the

* Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S. Wales, 1894, ix. (2), p. 198.

† An Album of the Weapons, Tools, Ornaments, and Articles of Dress of the Natives of the Pacific Islands, &c.; 3 pts. obl. London, 1890-95.

type of sculpture represented by loops returned upon themselves,* but differs from any I have figured in the absence of supplementary ornamentation. The same author's Pl. 353, fig. 3, is too indefinitely drawn to be determined with exactitude, but the figures delineated seem to consist of three series of alternating ovals or small rhombs, and is very possibly referable to my Section (*g*). Both are said to be from the north. A particularly wide boomerang† is figured from North Queensland, bearing an ornament quite different from anything I had before seen. Each margin of the weapon is bordered with a line of half-ovals, or half-rhombs, most probably the latter, and within these a concentric double line following the outline of the weapons. The median line is occupied by two or three fluctuating incisions from end to end. The apices of this boomerang are simple and non-mucronate.

As on former occasions, I am indebted to Mr. C. Hedley for the accompanying illustrations.

* Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S. Wales, 1894, ix. (2), Pt. 2, t. 15, f. 1; 1896, Pt. 1, t. 2, f. 1-4.

† Edge-Partington, *loc. cit.* t. 354, f. 15.